

## Register results

The following actions have been taken by Federal agencies. They have previously been summarized in CONSUMER REGISTER as proposals. Extent of consumer and other comment is reported when such information is available.

- **Agriculture Dept.** has established new voluntary standards for grades of potatoes for chipping that would provide a uniform method of determining chipping quality of potatoes. Agriculture received 560 comments on the proposal, mostly from potato growers (who generally approved of the proposal) and from potato chip manufacturers (who generally disapproved of the proposal). Details—*Federal Register*: Oct. 7, page 54562; Aug. 6, 1976, page 32896. CONSUMER REGISTER: Sept. 15, 1976.

- **Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB)** has adopted final regulations requiring all certificated airlines to include in their tariffs their rules and practices for transporting handicapped passengers who might need help in getting out of a plane during an emergency. In 1974 [CONSUMER REGISTER: Sept. 15, 1974] CAB said that all airline tariffs would have to conform with whatever rules **Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)** adopted because FAA regulates plane safety, and CAB regulates fares. Details—*Federal Register*: Aug. 31, page 43828; Aug. 14, 1974, page 29199. CONSUMER REGISTER: Sept. 1 and Sept. 15, 1974. For more information call or write Daniel D. Campbell, Civil Aeronautics Board, Washington, DC 20428; telephone 202-673-5437.

- **Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB)** has eliminated advance purchase requirements for low-cost One-stop-inclusive Tour Charters (OTCs), effective Nov. 3. Original rules specified that participants purchase their tours at least 15 days before departure for North American OTCs and at least 30 days before departure for all others. CAB says the liberalized rules will help reduce the high cancellation fees that have plagued charter passengers and will make the tours more attractive. Among the comments CAB received was one from the **Office of Consumer Affairs (OCA)** which supported the elimination of advance booking requirements. Details—*Federal Register*: Nov. 10 page 58515; March 2, page 12066. RATE REGISTER: April 1. For more information call or write Stephen Babcock, Civil Aeronautics Board, Washington, DC 20428; telephone 202-673-5442.

## Odometers

Dec. 5 is deadline for comments on **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA)** proposal to require dealers and distributors of cars and other vehicles to keep mileage records of a car when it is bought as well as when it is sold to another buyer. The proposed retention time is 4 years, and NHTSA says such retention would not only provide the government and other parties with documentation necessary to prove a violation of the law, but would pinpoint exactly where the violation took place.

Existing laws under the Motor Vehicle Information and Cost Savings Act prohibit odometer tampering [CONSUMER REGISTER: July 1, 1973] and require the seller of a car to disclose certain information to the buyer (odometer mileage reading; time of transfer; date of transfer; address of the seller; and a description of the car).

Details—*Federal Register*: Nov. 10, page 58546. Send comments to Docket Section, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Washington, DC 20590. For more information write or call Kathy DeMeter at above address; telephone 202-426-1834.

## Baby rattles

Dec. 19 is deadline for comments on **Consumer Product Safety Commission's (CPSC)** proposal to ban baby rattles which are small enough to get caught in an infant's throat and possibly cause suffocation.

CPSC says that since 1974 it has received reports of 8 choking deaths and 10 non-fatal choking incidents associated with rattles. The rattles that have been associated with choking incidents are shaped like telephone receivers, safety pins, barbells and clothespins.

CPSC urges parents and babysitters to watch carefully when children are playing with rattles or other small toys. If the rattles appear to be too small they should be broken and thrown away.

Details—*Federal Register*: Nov. 18, page 59511. Send comments to Secretary, Consumer Product Safety Commission, Washington, DC 20207. For more information call or write Elaine Besson at above address; telephone 301-492-6453.

## Insulation

Jan. 13, 1978 is deadline for comments on **Federal Trade Commission's (FTC)** proposed disclosure requirements and methods for determining the resistance values ("R" values) that rate the effectiveness of thermal insulation materials.

The proposal, if adopted, is intended to insure that:

- R values of thermal insulation materials will be tested in a standardized way.
- Sufficient pre-purchase information will be available to enable consumers to evaluate the resistance capabilities of the insulation materials.
- Insulation products advertisements will be fair and nondeceptive (such as disclosing the conditions under which dollar savings can be achieved through insulation).

FTC notes that although the R value is an easy-to-understand concept for insulation manufacturers and building contractors, it is a new concept for most consumers. For example, consumers are generally used to thinking about their insulation needs in terms of thickness, but it is actually the R value that counts in considering insulation needs. [See CONSUMER NEWS: Oct. 15 for guidance in insulating your home.]

Public hearings on thermal insulation materials will be held Feb. 23, 1978 at 9 a.m. in Room 332, Federal Trade Commission Bldg., 6th and Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20580. For information on reimbursement of public participation costs, call or write Bonnie Naradzay, Special Assistant for Public Participation, Bureau of Consumer Protection, Federal Trade Commission, Washington, DC 20580; telephone 202-523-3868.

Details—*Federal Register*: Nov. 18, page 59678. CONSUMER NEWS: Sept. 15, and Oct. 15. Send written comments to Jack Kahn at the address listed above. For more information call Heidi P. Sanchez; telephone 202-724-1453.

NOTE: In a related matter, **Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)** has announced that it is beginning a consumer information and education campaign on the safety aspects of home insulation. If you have any problems in the safety area, call CPSC's toll-free hotline: 800-638-2666; Maryland residents only call 800-492-2937.

## Mileage guide

**Energy Dept.** has announced that the 1978 *Gas Mileage Guide for New Car Buyers* is now available in car dealers' showrooms as well as by mail from Consumer Information Center, Pueblo, CO 81009. Distribution of the guide is required by a section of the Energy Policy and Conservation Act.

Details—*Federal Register*: Nov. 18, page 59547. **CONSUMER NEWS**: Oct. 1.

## Grocery carts

**Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)** has denied a petition to develop a safety standard for grocery carts.

As of June 1, CPSC had investigated 35 accidents associated with grocery carts and found no hazard pattern. CPSC disagreed, therefore, with the petitioner's contention that grocery carts with a wider base and lower center of gravity could reduce the possibilities of tipping over or children falling out of the cart. In addition, CPSC felt the relative risk of injury associated with grocery carts compared with CPSC resources available for setting safety standards for all consumer products did not indicate its establishing a mandatory safety standard. CPSC recognized that proper use of such carts may be a factor in reducing risk of injury and will encourage cart makers to develop a voluntary cautionary labeling program. CPSC added that the present trend by retail stores to restrict use of carts to stores and loading areas should reduce injuries associated with the use of carts in parking lots and away from store areas, noting that 49% of the investigated accidents took place in such areas.

Details—*Federal Register*: Oct. 27, page 56633. For more information write or call Mark Gulack, Consumer Product Safety Commission, Washington, DC 20207; telephone 301-492-6754.

## Mail disguised as bills

**Postal Service (PS)** has issued a regulation intended to provide additional protection to consumers who receive mail which looks like a bill or an invoice but which is actually a solicitation for business.

PS's regulations on mail solicitations have been in effect for some time [*CONSUMER REGISTER*: Oct. 15, 1975]. These regulations contain requirements for disclaimers on the face of the solicitation—but not on the envelope—which say "THIS IS NOT A BILL" and another disclaimer to the effect that "THIS IS A SOLICITATION. YOU ARE UNDER NO OBLIGATION TO PAY UNLESS YOU ACCEPT THIS OFFER."

In commenting on the proposal, the **Office of Consumer Affairs (OCA)** recommended even more stringent requirements than those PS adopted.

The rule becomes effective Dec. 8.

Details—*Federal Register*: Nov. 8, page 58169; Aug. 31, page 43868; Sept. 16, 1975, page 42741. For more information call George Davis; telephone 202-245-4385.

## Peaches

March 1, 1978 is deadline for comments on **Agriculture Dept.**'s proposed revision of its canned clingstone standards to update grading procedures and to eliminate alternate grade names for clingstone peaches.

The proposed new grading procedure, called the "attributes standard" based on statistical principles, was suggested by the Canners League of California and would replace the current system of scoring quality factors on a 100-point scale. The attributes standard calls for classifying quality defects according to severity, using the categories of minor, major, severe and critical. The number of defects in individual samples may not exceed specified limits in each of these categories for each grade.

The proposal would provide for 2 separate inspection plans—one for fixed lot inspection after production, and another for on-line inspection during production. Both procedures would require the same quality levels for each grade.

Under the proposal, Agriculture would retain the 3 grades (A, B and C) for canned clingstone peaches. However, the terms Fancy, Choice and Standard would be dropped in line with the **Food Safety and Quality Service (FSQS)** policy to standardize grade terminology for all canned and frozen fruits and vegetables.

Factors to be included in grading include similar varietal characteristics, flavor and odor, color, uniformity of size, and damage.

Details—*Federal Register*: April 28, page 21746. Send comments to Hearing Clerk, Agriculture Dept., South Bldg., Washington, DC 20250. For further information write or call Dale C. Dunham at above address; telephone 202-447-4693.

## Saccharin

**Food and Drug Administration (FDA)** has published tentative guidelines to help manufacturers of saccharin products comply with a warning label requirement on saccharin-containing food, including sugar substitutes (except saccharin packed in bulk form for eventual use in the manufacture of food).

Earlier this year FDA proposed to restrict or ban the use of the artificial sweetener in food, drugs and cosmetics [*CONSUMER REGISTER*: May 1 and Aug. 1], but as a result of the Saccharin Study and Labeling Act (SSLA), signed by President Carter on Nov. 23, such a ban will not be put into effect for at least 18 months while additional evaluation of the safety of saccharin is being conducted. However, beginning Feb. 21, 1978, all food containing saccharin must be conspicuously labeled: "Use of this product may be hazardous to your health. This product contains saccharin which has been determined to cause cancer in laboratory animals."

After FDA conducts a hearing on saccharin on Dec. 2, final guidelines will be issued. Contingent on the signing of SSLA, the hearing date was set too late for timely notice in *CONSUMER REGISTER*.

Details—*Federal Register*: Nov. 15, page 59119. For more information call or write Caesar Roy, Bureau of Foods (HFF-310), Food and Drug Administration, Washington, DC 20204; telephone 202-245-1567.

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# consumer comment

Federal agencies want to learn your views on proposals and other items published in the *Federal Register* and CONSUMER REGISTER. Agencies use these comments in their decision making.

These forms are provided for you to use, if you wish, in commenting on these items. For more lengthy comments, feel free to use a plain sheet of paper. Send comment forms to addresses listed in CONSUMER REGISTER summaries. CONSUMER NEWS is publishing these forms in cooperation with the **Food and Drug Administration (FDA)**.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Clip this form, fill in blanks, write your comments & mail to agency noted in CONSUMER REGISTER item.

This is my opinion on (title of item in CONSUMER REGISTER) \_\_\_\_\_

by (name of agency) \_\_\_\_\_

published in *Federal Register* on (date) \_\_\_\_\_ on (page) \_\_\_\_\_

(over)

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# consumer comment

CONSUMER REGISTER publishes proposed and final rules, regulations and notices of interest to consumers originally appearing in the *Federal Register*. Notices on proposed rules published in the *Federal Register* and summarized in CONSUMER REGISTER give consumers the opportunity to participate in rule making prior to the adoption of final rules. The *Federal Register* is published to provide a uniform system for making available to the public regulations and legal notices issued by Federal agencies.

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